

Case Study

Lush Cosmetics

LUSH FRESH
HANDMADE
COSMETICS

Bringing the Lush brand to life at the table

Client:

Lush Cosmetics

Website:

www.lush.co.uk

Base:

Poole, Dorset

Industry:

Luxury retail goods

Event:

International meetings
Award ceremonies



Results:

Successful relationship founded on shared, social objectives

Themed fine dining experience reflecting Lush brand values

Vegan and vegetarian dishes created with flair and imagination

Intimate, friendly atmosphere for 680 diners

Client brief fully met in terms of:

- Branded, themed menus and decor
- Ethical food choices
- Fast, friendly service
- Relaxed, intimate atmosphere
- Wow factor

Lush is one of those defining brands that needs little introduction. Inspired by food, fragrance, freshness and fair trade - and more than a hint of hippy culture - husband-and-wife team Mark and Mo Constantine OBE, along with four co-founders, began creating their game-changing handmade cosmetics in the 1990s. Twenty years on, Lush employs more than 9,000 people globally and has over 900 stores in 49 countries selling its unique, sweet smelling products.

The brief

In 2014, Lush Cosmetics brought its International Christmas showcase to the halls of Bournemouth International Centre, with a challenge of creating, among other things, a Lush-inspired dessert to mimic those Lush skincare products you always wished you could eat.

Lush's association with food is, after all, inescapable. Its handmade soaps, shampoos, moisturisers, scrubs, masks, make-up, fizzing bath bombs and toothpaste tablets look like food. They're 100% vegetarian, 70% vegan, 40% naked and include

edible ingredients like grapefruit juice, vanilla beans, avocado butter, rosemary oil, fresh papaya and coconut.

Buying a Lush product is just like buying fresh cheese, fruits, pastries and cakes in a gourmet grocers, displayed with flair and imagination. The soap is sold in wedges, priced by weight and wrapped in greaseproof paper.

"It's exactly like being a chef. Try it out and see how it is," is how Mark Constantine describes the Lush creative process.

A Lush factory is more like a kitchen than a production line. Products are crafted by hand, with the help of catering equipment, including a sausage machine and a muffin maker. It has the feel of a cottage industry making local products for local folk, despite the company's multi-million pound, international status.

"BH Live has a number of clear affinities with the Lush brand," says Amanda Taylor, head of the in-house travel team at Lush. *"Both are socially responsible businesses, actively supporting organisations and activities that promote health, wellbeing and fairness in society. Both are local businesses that more than hold*

their own in their sector, sourcing products and services from local suppliers. Both are environmentally responsible, with clear policies on energy consumption and recycling. Above all, they share a passion for innovation, creativity and a desire to generate that quintessential wow factor that makes a business stand out from the crowd."

The service

The Lush International Christmas Showcase took the shape of an exhibition to present its new Christmas range to the sales team, and run a series of workshops to train them up in the art of selling these seasonal delights.

With Lush events, it's the themed food that steals the show. It calls for a great deal of culinary imagination to create eye-catching vegetarian and vegan dishes that taste as good as they look. Plus a themed signature dish to express the Lush brand.

"They wanted us to replicate a selection of their Christmas goodies as desserts, using the Lush soap moulds," explains Matt Piovan, General Manager BH Live Hospitality.

"We obviously couldn't use any animal products as ingredients or setting agents, so we needed to experiment a few times before it could be done to perfection. But we managed to pull it off and the client was delighted."

Less than six months later, Lush was back with a new theme to test the BH Live team. The Fight Animal Testing campaign was the chosen theme for the Lush International Meeting in January 2015.

"We were asked to create a themed backdrop, cocktails and dinner menu to reflect the Fight Animal Testing campaign," says Matt Piovan.

"Animal Testing is all about laboratories and chemical processes, so we needed to find ways of expressing this in an entertaining way. We served

cocktails in lab beakers, with a chilli swizzle stick that made the drink froth and steam. We created a starter, fashioned into pipettes. And, for a grand finale, we served the meringue dessert on a bed of Lush-scented, smoking dry ice."



The result

"Our recent event brought together guests from our worldwide locations to celebrate our annual awards which recognise individual and team performance," says Amanda Taylor.

"Returning to the BIC was an easy decision with versatile spaces which helped us recreate our science-themed Lush Prize event from last year in the Windsor Hall, with the addition of dry ice, bright lights and decorations that made the space feel intimate, despite the size."

"The BIC team worked extremely hard to ensure our event ran seamlessly, the food was excellent, meeting the needs of 680 for a sit down dinner, the service was superb and overall this was a huge success."

"Hospitality is fundamental to the delegate experience and a major competitive factor in securing new business for our venues," says BH Live Director of Venues, Pat Coyne.

"We work hard to create fabulous, branded dining experiences that are a perfect fit for the client's brand, event content, delegates and budget. The Lush events provide one of the best tests of our ability to achieve this and a great example of the innovation and imagination our team brings to the table."

"With our UK head office located in Poole, the location of Bournemouth International Centre is perfect to ensure the maximum

attendance by our locally based support teams, allowing them the opportunity to engage with their Lush colleagues from around the world across all areas of our business," says Amanda Taylor.

"Bournemouth has excellent transport links and a wide selection of accommodation which supports our needs. The whole team at the BIC work extremely hard across all departments; the AV team, hospitality, catering and operations teams are always on hand immediately should we need additional support and as such contribute to the overall success of our events."

About Lush

Lush is a business driven by innovation and ethics, earning it a string of awards. Lush places emphasis on fresh ingredients like organic fruits and vegetables. It operates a strict policy against animal testing, supports Fair Trade and Community Trade initiatives, and develops products that can be sold 'naked' to the consumer, with no packaging. Lush has won the RSPCA Good Business Award for 2006, 2007 and 2009, the 2006 PETA Trailblazer Award for Animal Welfare and the Best in Business Award at the 2014 Observer Ethical Awards. Co-founders Mark and Mo Constantine were awarded OBEs for services to the beauty industry in 2010.

www.lush.com

About BH Live

BH Live works with public and private businesses, charities, sports organisations, trade bodies and local hotels and retail operations to generate millions of pounds for the local economy through its leisure, conference, exhibition and entertainment venues. BH Live's award-winning hospitality underpins these activities with world-class fine dining experiences and informal, on-site catering through the Terrace brand of cafes and bars. Event organisers can entertain their delegates in branded, themed settings, with food to match.

www.bhlive.org.uk/hospitality